

an electrical contact component electrically interengaged with a first conductor, said contact component including a contact section, another section spaced from said contact section, and an intermediate section that interconnects said contact section and said another section, and an opening extending through said intermediate section that receives a second conductor;

at least one spring locking clip that is spring biased to grip the second conductor and hold the second conductor in electrical interengagement with said contact section, while resisting disengagement of the second conductor from said contact section;

and

31
a release hole formed through said contact section transversely offset from said opening for receiving a clip release element, said clip having a portion extending transversely outward of said opening in line with said release hole for engagement by the clip release element upon insertion of the clip release element into the release hole to urge said clip into an open condition to permit unobstructed insertion and removal of the second conductor into and out of said contact component.

40. (New) The connector of claim 39 wherein said clip is secured to said another section and is spring biased toward said contact section.

41. (New) The connector of claim 40 wherein said clip comprises a leaf spring.

Please rewrite claims 25 and 32 in independent form as follows:

S, b2 42. (New) A locking connector for electrically interconnecting two or more electrical conductors comprising:

an electrical contact component electrically interengaged with a first conductor, said contact component including a contact section and *an opening that receives a second conductor;*

at least one spring locking clip that is spring biased to grip the second conductor and hold the second conductor in electrical interengagement with said contact section, while resisting disengagement of the second conductor from said contact section, said clip having a grip locking end portion in alignment with said opening that is spring biased to grip the second conductor, said grip locking end portion being transversely curved to conform to the profile of the second conductor;

and

a release hole formed through said contact section transversely offset from said opening for receiving a clip release element, said clip having a portion extending transversely outward of said opening in line with said release hole for engagement by the clip release element upon insertion of the clip release element into the release hole to urge said clip into an open condition to permit unobstructed insertion and removal of the second conductor into and out of said contact component.

43. (New) A locking connector for electrically interconnecting two or more electrical conductors comprising:

an electrical contact component electrically interengaged with a first conductor, said contact component including a contact section and an opening that receives a second conductor, said contact section including guide means for locating the second conductor relative to said clip, said guide means comprising an elongate rib formed in said contact section transversely offset from said opening;
and

a release hole extending through said elongate rib in said contact section transversely offset from said opening for receiving a clip release element, said clip having a portion extending transversely outward of said opening in line with said release hole for engagement by the clip release element upon insertion of the clip release element into the release hole to urge said clip into an open condition to permit unobstructed insertion and removal of the second conductor into and out of said contact component.

B1 Please add the following new claims:

Subc3 44. (New) A locking connector for electrically interconnecting two or more electrical conductors comprising:

an electrical contact component electrically interengaged with a first conductor, said contact component including a contact section, another section spaced from said contact section, and an intermediate section that interconnects said contact section and said another section, and an opening extending through said intermediate section that receives a second conductor;
and

at least one spring locking clip that is spring biased to grip the second conductor and hold the second conductor in electrical interengagement with said contact section, while resisting disengagement of the second conductor from said contact section.

45. (New) The connector of claim 44 wherein said clip is secured to said another section and is spring biased toward said contact section.

46. (New) The connector of claim 45 wherein said clip comprises a leaf spring.

Please amend claims 24, 26, 30, 33, 35 and 37 as follows:

24. (Amended) The connector of claim 44 wherein said clip has a grip locking end portion in alignment with said opening that is spring biased to grip the second conductor.

26. (Amended) The connector of claim 44 wherein said clip is electrically conductive.

30. (Amended) The connector of claim 44 wherein said contact section includes guide means for locating the second conductor relative to said clip.

33. (Amended) The connector of claim 44 further including an enclosure that

BS accommodates said contact component, said enclosure having an inlet aligned with
said opening for receiving the second conductor.

35. (Amended) The connector of claim 39 wherein said contact component

has opposite ends, said opening that receives the second conductor extending through
one of said ends, and another opening that receives the first conductor extending
BL4 through the other of said ends, and at least one additional spring locking clip that is
spring biased to grip the first conductor and hold the first conductor in electrical
interengagement with said contact section, while resisting disengagement of the first
conductor from said contact section.

37. (Amended) The connector of claim 44 further comprising an enclosure

that includes a generally rectilinear component having an interior space that
accommodates said contact component, said rectilinear component including a front
B7 surface having an inlet aligned with said opening for receiving the second conductor,
and a rib that peripherally surrounds said rectilinear component and extends
transversely to said front surface, said generally rectilinear component including at least
one surface that has a recess formed therein which facilitates a user's grip.

The changes to these claims are detailed in the attached Appendix.

Please cancel claims 21, 23, 25, 27-29 and 32 without prejudice.